

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1.-23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) An oligopeptide or polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence with at least 81% identity to SEQ ID NO:14.

25. (Previously Presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 24, which reacts with sera from individuals who are infected with the hepatitis B variant HDB 11.

26. (Previously Presented) An oligopeptide or polypeptide, comprising an amino acid sequence in which from 0 to 9 amino acids are substituted, deleted or inserted as compared with SEQ ID NO:14.

27. (Previously Presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 26, which reacts with sera from individuals who are infected with the hepatitis B variant HDB 11.

28. (Currently Amended) An oligopeptide or polypeptide comprising at least 5 consecutive amino acids from SEQ ID NO:12, and comprising at least one of the amino acid positions 54, 61, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 87, and 94 of SEQ ID NO:12, or comprising at least 7 ~~at least 6~~ consecutive amino acids from SEQ ID NO:12, and comprising at least amino acid position 85 of SEQ ID NO:12.

29. (Previously Presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 28, comprising an amino acid sequence chosen from the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NO:12 to SEQ ID NO:30.

30. (Previously Presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 28, which reacts with sera from individuals who are infected with the hepatitis B variant HDB 11.

31. (Currently Amended) An oligopeptide or polypeptide, comprising a length of at least 5 amino acids, and comprising at least one of the amino acid positions 54, 61, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 85–87, and 94 of SEQ ID NO:12, or comprising a length of at least 7 ~~at least 6~~ amino acids, and comprising position 85 of SEQ ID NO:12, wherein position 54 is alanine, position 61 is isoleucine, position 72 is alanine, position 73 is isoleucine, position 74 is asparagine, position 75 is asparagine, position 76 is arginine, position 78 is glutamine, position 85 is threonine, position 87 is histidine, and position 94 is tyrosine.

32. (Previously Presented) The oligopeptide or polypeptide of claim 31, which reacts with sera from individuals who are infected with the hepatitis B variant HDB 11.

33. (Previously Presented) A composition comprising at least one immunogenic molecule comprising one or more oligopeptides or polypeptides as claimed in one of claims 24 to 32, and optionally further comprising one or more HBV immunogens.

34. (Previously Presented) A method of preparing the oligopeptide or polypeptide as claimed in one of claims 24, 26, 28, 29, or 31, which comprises culturing a cell and expressing the oligopeptide or polypeptide in said cell.

35. (Previously Presented) The method as claimed in claim 34, wherein the oligopeptide or polypeptide is isolated from the cells and separated from other oligopeptides or polypeptides.

36.-40. (Canceled)

41. (Previously Presented) A method for detecting a hepatitis B antigen, comprising

(a) incubating a sample with an antibody which binds to the oligopeptide or polypeptide as claimed in one of claims 24, 26, 28, 29, or 31 under conditions which allow the formation of antigen-antibody complexes; and

(b) detecting antigen-antibody complexes.

42. (Withdrawn) A method of identifying antibodies directed against a hepatitis B antigen, comprising

(a) incubating a sample with an oligopeptide or polypeptide as claimed in one of claims 24, 26, 28, 29, or 31 under conditions which allow the formation of antigen-antibody complexes; and

(b) detecting antibody-antigen complexes comprising said oligopeptide or polypeptide.